



Litter Picks

Electronic Newsletter

February 2008

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Environmental Enhancement
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DEQ's Community Involvement Initiative: The Department of Environmental Quality is dedicated to helping the public better understand DEQ's role in protecting the environment, and to involving the public more effectively in environmental decision making.

Welcome to Litter Picks, a look at litter prevention news in the Commonwealth and across the nation. We hope that some of this information is helpful to you in your programs, and hope you'll help us with news from your area related to litter prevention and awareness. Had a successful clean up event? Recognized companies or citizens for their clean up efforts? Let us know by sending this information to Sheila Barnett at smbarnett@deq.virginia.gov.

First Impressions Program

In the fall of 2007, the **George Washington Regional Commission** established the First Impressions Program. A primary goal of the First Impressions program is to combat litter. Approximately 37 probationers from the region have been cleaning up the roads for three months. They have logged approximately 77 hours. Laurel Hemming, the First Impressions Program Manager, estimates that their labor has saved the taxpayers a minimum of \$500 when calculated using the minimum wage.

To learn more about the First Impressions program, contact Laurel Hemming at hammig@gwregion.org or (540) 373-2890 ext. 26.

Fairfax County Honors former Clean Fairfax Council Board Member with Litter and Recycling Grant Program

The Clean Fairfax Council and the Fairfax County Recycling Program have selected 18 area schools to receive a Johnnie Forte, Jr. Memorial Litter/Recycling Grant.

Each school will receive a grant of up to \$500 for their proposed environmental project involving litter prevention, litter control or recycling. Each grantee will give a presentation on their project at the awards ceremony on April 19, 2008 as part of Fairfax County's Earth Day/Arbor Day celebration.

For more information contact Rosemary Byrne, Executive Director, Clean Fairfax Council at cleanfairfax1@aol.com or (703)-324-5471 or visit: <http://www.cleanfairfaxcouncil.org/forte.htm>

Catalog Choice – Stopping Unwanted Catalogs

A website has been created by the Natural Resources Defense Council, National Wildlife Federation and the Ecology Center called Catalog Choice. The purpose of this website is to stop the mailing of unwanted catalogs. Go to: www.catalogchoice.org

Wanted: Virginia Cleanup Information

Litter Program Managers, please remember to periodically check out DEQ's litter and recycling contacts page. Let me know about any changes and updates so that I can refer the public to the correct person in their jurisdiction for local litter and recycling programs. Go to:

www.deq.virginia.gov/recycle/contactlist.html.

Please send me information on your local cleanup plans and results so that I can list them in upcoming editions of "Litter Picks." smbarnett@deq.virginia.gov or (804) 698-4055.

Spring Cleanups are being Planned

Spring cleanups are being planned around the Commonwealth and throughout the nation!

You may wish to register your cleanup events with Stewardship Virginia so that you attract more volunteers to your spring cleanups. Stewardship Virginia runs from April 1 – May 31. <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/stewardship/>

The Virginia Department of Transportation has scheduled the Spring Cleanup date for Adopt-a-Highway for Saturday, April 12, 2008. Typically, Adopt-a-Highway volunteers adopt a stretch of road and agree to clean the road four times a year. However, Adopt-a-Highway Coordinators welcome volunteers who wish to do a one-time cleanup and will provide the volunteers with cleanup supplies. For information about Adopt-a-Highway pickups, contact the local Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator at: <http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/prog-aah-default.asp>

2007 Great American Cleanup Results

Keep America Beautiful's Great American Cleanup is an annual event that takes place from March 1 – May 31. In 2007 an estimated 2.8 million volunteers spent 7.7 million hours participating in the Keep America Beautiful Program. Nationally 17,000 communities benefited from the Great American Cleanup. Volunteers collected 200 million pounds of litter and debris and cleaned 178,000 miles of roads, streets, and Highways. There are 15 KAB member affiliates in Virginia. If you are interested in participating in a KAB cleanup, contact a local Virginia KAB affiliate:

http://www.kab.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Affiliate_State_Virginia

For more information about the Great American Cleanup, go to: <http://www.kab.org/site/PageServer?pagename=gaclanding>

Litter Picks Continued

Cigarette Litter Information & Hampton Roads Conference

The Hampton Roads Clean Community hosted a regional Clean Community Conference at the Sandy Bottom Nature Park in Hampton on January 25 - 26, 2008. The title of the Conference was "Cigarette Litter: More than Meets the Eye."

Presenters included Katie Register, Clean Virginia Waterways; Andrea Maples & Richard Harr, Newport News Department of Engineering Stormwater Division; Dana Perry, Newport News Fire Department, Rod McLeod, Downtown Norfolk Council; Star May, Downtown Hampton Development Partnership; Carrie Gallagher, Keep America Beautiful; John Deuel, Keep Norfolk Beautiful; and a Panel Discussion with Dan Baxter, Mercinda Fiedorczyk, and Rolland Schattschneider.

Keep America Beautiful (KAB) started the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program (CLPP) five years ago. KAB reports that there has been an average 54% reduction of cigarette litter among the 150 programs that have tested the program in their communities, and a six percent improvement in 2006 over previous years. Many people who smoke do not consider themselves litterbugs as they would not purposefully litter other items. KAB, in partnership with Phillip Morris USA, the leading manufacturer and marketer of cigarettes in the United States, has been working to educate smokers about the environmental hazards that cigarette butts have on the environment and to encourage smokers to dispose of them properly. Phillip Morris sends direct mailings to their customers that include pocket ashtrays, a convenient and portable device for putting out and storing cigarette litter. In addition to supporting the KAB program and the new cigarette litter prevention program, Phillip Morris USA is willing to partner with other agencies that wish to address cigarette litter.

Keep Norfolk Beautiful and The City of Norfolk conducted cigarette litter awareness pilot campaigns in 2005 and 2006. Downtown and the Wards Corner shopping district businesses were invited to participate in the program. In a partnership with the Friends of Norfolk's Environment, Inc., the business districts contributed to the purchase of cigarette receptacles placed in strategic transitions areas adjacent to their businesses. Local businesses and volunteers conducted cigarette litter prevention awareness activities including providing posters, table cards and announcements. When smokers were observed disposing the butts properly, the smokers were given a pocket ashtray and coupons to local businesses. The program was well received and resulted in a 43% reduction in cigarette litter in most targeted areas.

John Deuel, Recycling and Litter Program Manager for the City of Norfolk and KAB Representative for the CLPP, is willing to assist other localities in organizing a cigarette litter awareness campaign in their jurisdictions. His contact information is: jdeuel2012@gmail.com.

For more information about the cigarette litter conference, visit the HR Clean website at: <http://www.hrclean.org/>

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Girl Scout Brownie Eco-Explorer Badge Lends itself well to teaching about Animals and Litter

In **King William County**, 19 girl scouts earned their Eco-Badges on January 11, 2008. The children learned about how animals interact with their environment and trash that isn't supposed to be part of the natural world. The girls made paper chains and pasted pictures of what animals eat on the links. The children had the option of including a vulture on their web chains. Vultures will eat anything that becomes road kill and animals are attracted to the roadways by waste –especially food remains that are thrown out of cars.

The girls learned about ways that they can help animals in nature. Henry the Herron (from DEQ's Environmental Education Program) paid us a special visit. He illustrated a story of how he was walking along the Mattaponi River and saw a minnow. While trying to eat the minnow, he stuck his head through a plastic six pack ring and not only missed his fish, but got the plastic ring stuck around his neck. After Henry got weak from not being able to catch any fish because of the plastic ring, one of the girls was able to "catch" him. The girls took turns cutting up the plastic rings to free Henry and ensure that no other animal's head would become trapped.

The girls made birdseed feeders to put in their yards or woods away from the road so that birds could get to them safely. Away from the road and in a safe place is where our apple cores should go too.

To read about Henry's plight, go to:

www.deq.virginia.gov/export/sites/default/education/pdf/ps1.pdf-2008-01-20. For more information about the meeting, contact Sheila Barnett at smbarnett@deq.virginia.gov or (804) 698-4055.

"Dreamers Who Do" Trash Video

"Dreamers Who Do" is a short video presently showing on Current TV. It addresses pollution and specifically trash that winds up in and around the Chesapeake Bay. The Alice Ferguson Foundation encourages people who are concerned about litter to view the video and vote for it. If it receives enough votes it will be aired on television. Interesting comments posted by individuals are also important. Go to: http://current.com/items/88804181_dreamers_who_do

For more information about the Alice Ferguson Foundation's support of the video and upcoming meetings go to: http://www.virginia.gov/cmsportal2/cgi-bin/activity-details.cgi?site=0&mode=activity&details_f=A080110811009847

Water Pollution Prevention Public Service Announcement

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) produced a PSA to encourage people to be mindful of storm drains and pollution.

The PSA has information for how people can join the Adopt-a-Highway program which is sponsored by VDOT or how they can become involved in marking storm drains which is sponsored by DCR.

To watch the PSA or read the transcript, go to:

<http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/prog-aah-default.asp>